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WESTERN SAHARA

ANTHONY G. PAZZANITA

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VOLUME 190

Western Sahara

Anthony G. Pazzanita

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Introduction

By the latter half of the 1990s, Western Sahara confronted the international community with one of its last remaining problems of decolonization and self-determination due to the territory's fiercely contested status, as it was claimed by both the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front. This selective bibliography of the literature pertaining to Western Sahara and the dispute revolving around it surveys at some length the wide variety of writings and perspectives on the territory over the past several decades, and also (inasmuch as is possible in a volume of its kind) attempts to relate the story of the land and its people through the medium of the annotations provided with each entry. In whatever manner the competing claims to Western Sahara are finally resolved, the sources included herein should be useful to scholars, students, and other persons who, in one capacity or another, have the occasion to deal with this major North African political dilemma.

Early history of Western Sahara, prehistory to the late 19th century

In common with much of the rest of the modern-day Sahara, the 266,000 square kilometre territory now called Western Sahara has known a time when it was blessed with a far gentler climate and with a richer variety of plant and animal life than has been the case for the past three millennia. So far as can be deduced from geological and archaeological records, the Neolithic period in Western Sahara was characterized by nearly unending grasslands, abundant animal life, and a relatively stable (if very small) population of nomadic hunter-gatherers of mostly Negroid stock, unlike the modern people of the territory, who are lighter-skinned and who possess, broadly speaking, 'Caucasian' facial features. Cave and rock paintings and other relics left behind by these inhabitants testify to the way they lived and the environment they confronted, but from about 2,500 BC, these peoples were obliged to migrate far southward into what is presently sub-Saharan Africa. This

as of 1984. Although the author excluded virtually all newspaper coverage, even the very shortest items in magazines and specialist journals have found their way into this compilation. The modern-day Western Sahara conflict (including important international legal issues) occupies the latter half of the book, with the physical and social characteristics of the territory and its pre-colonial and colonial-era history constituting most of the remainder. Within the long section dealing with the post-1975 dispute, the available literature is divided into categories devoted to Western Sahara's international dimensions, the implications for North Africa as a whole, and internal and refugee-related factors, among others. This volume also has a useful introduction, giving an summary of the written material on Western Sahara and mentioning the works of those authors who were especially prolific.

Historical dictionary of Western Sahara.
See item no. 618.

Historical dictionary of Western Sahara (second edition).
See item no. 619.

Indexes

There follow three separate indexes: authors (personal and corporate); titles; and subjects. Title entries are italicized and refer either to the main titles, or to other works cited in the annotations. The numbers refer to bibliographical entry rather than page numbers. Individual index entries are arranged in alphabetical sequence.

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